Chapter 56

56

I WAS THE ONE WHO WAS ALWAYS BEING SUPPORTED.
"FROM NOW ON,
I'LL MAKE SURE NOT TO MISS ANYTHING ABOUT YOU."
"YOU CAN EVEN PUSH YOURSELF BEYOND YOUR LIMITS IF YOU WANT TO."
"BUT JUST KNOW THAT I'LL TAKE IT UPON MYSELF TO RUN OVER AND HUG YOU."
AND SURPRISINGLY, I DIDN'T NOTICE HIS FEELINGS AT ALL...
...I THINK.
I FELT LIKE I WAS BEING SWUNG AROUND IN CIRCLES
BUT IN ACTUALITY,
"TO COME AND CARRY YOUR BAGS FOR YOU, AND THINGS LIKE THAT."

...PROBA-
BLY.
TICK
TOCK
TOCK
TICK
TICK
TOCK
.....
HOW MUCH TIME HAS PASSED?
30 MINUTES.
GO HOME.

Good afternoon
OH, SUWA-SAN.
YOU JUST COLLAPSED THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY, DIDN'T YOU? DON'T PUSH YOURSELF TOO HARD!
IT'S ALRIGHT, I SLEPT FOR 2 DAYS SO I'VE RECOVERED.
SORRY FOR CAUSING TROUBLE. I'M REFLECTING ON IT ALL.
But aren't you collapsing because you're reflecting too much?!
EH?
Oh! It's Machida-san!
YOU'RE WELL ENOUGH TO COME TO SCHOOL ALREADY?
WHAT?!
MORE IMPORTANTLY, MY RIGHT WRIST STILL HURTS FROM THE WAY YOUR BOYFRIEND GRABBED IT
HUH?!
WHOOPS, WAS IT THE LEFT WRIST? WHICH ONE WAS IT...
What are you talking about? Don't be silly! It was only yesterday that you collapsed from exhaustion! You sure you weren't a draft horse or something in your past life?! Mr. Yamasan said that she'll fill in so you just go and rest!
SORRY FOR MISSING WORK...
Take care!
Not at all! Minami-chan came in so all was well!

Just kidding!
Wehehe!
!!?
But he seems to care for you a lot!
HE'S A GOOD BOYFRIEND.
HUH?
"YOU DON'T WANT ANYTHING ELSE?"
HE DID A LOT OF THINGS FOR ME,
GO HOME.
BUT I FEEL LIKE THAT'S THE ONLY THING I SAID IN RETURN.
SPEAKING OF WHICH,
DID I THANK HIM PROPERLY FOR HELPING ME...?

I'M THE WORST!
Oh!
MACHIDA! LONG TIME NO SEE!
YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD ME YOU WERE COMING, I WOULD'VE GONE TO PICK YOU UP...
I WAS THINKING ABOUT WHAT I COULD DO TO REPAY NARUSE,
BUT...
WHAT CAN I DO FOR HIM...?
IN THE END,
At the front entrance (laugh)
THANK YOU.
You want some, Senpai?
No thank you
UM, HERE.
IT'S A SMALL GIFT FOR THE CLUB SINCE THE KANTOU PRELIMINARIES ARE IN 3 DAYS.
OH!
WHY DON'T YOU GO GIVE IT TO THEM PERSONALLY? THEY'LL BE THRILLED!

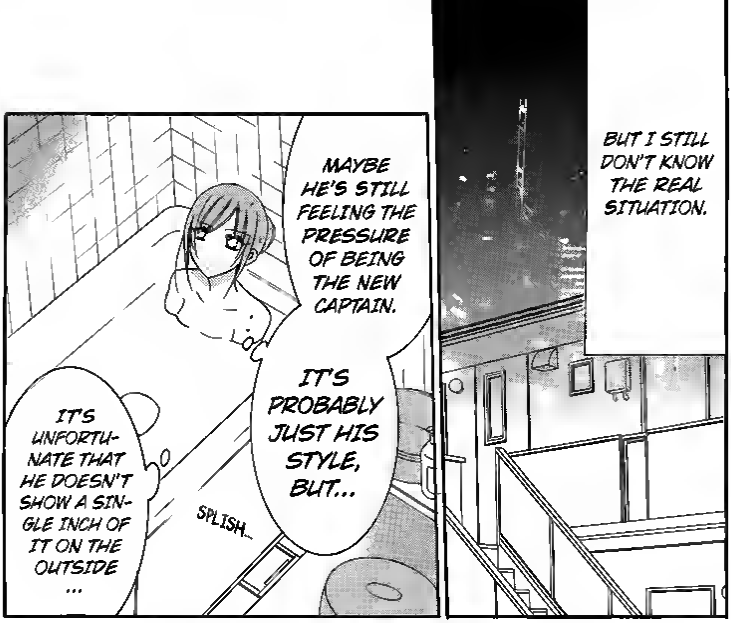
ALL I CAN DO IS CHEER FOR THE RYUHOKU BASKETBALL CLUB.
Squeak
Squeak
POUNCE
OH.
THEY'RE PRAC-TICING.
Badump
Badump
I NEED TO LEAVE. MY HEART JUST SKIPPED A BEAT!
Slap
IT'S JUST THAT IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I SAW HIM PLAY BASKETBALL...
AH!
HIME-CHAN-SENPAI!
YES!

I THINK I JAMMED MY FINGER BY ACCIDENT.
WHAT?!
IT'S CAUSE YOU DON'T PAY ATTENTION TO WHERE YOU'RE WALKIN'! WATCH IT NEXT TIME!
'BY ACCIDENT' MY ASS!
KUON'S RIGHT, USAMI! THE PRELIMINARIES ARE JUST AROUND THE CORNER, SO YOU'VE GOTTA BE MORE CAREFUL.
ABE, YOUR NOSE IS BLEEDING!
WHAT?!!
WHOA!
I-I'VE GOT A TISSUE!
I-LET'S COOL IT DOWN WITH SOME ICE!
HIMENO-SAN...
Raise your head and put it at an angle of 45 degrees!
45 degrees! An angle of 45 degrees!

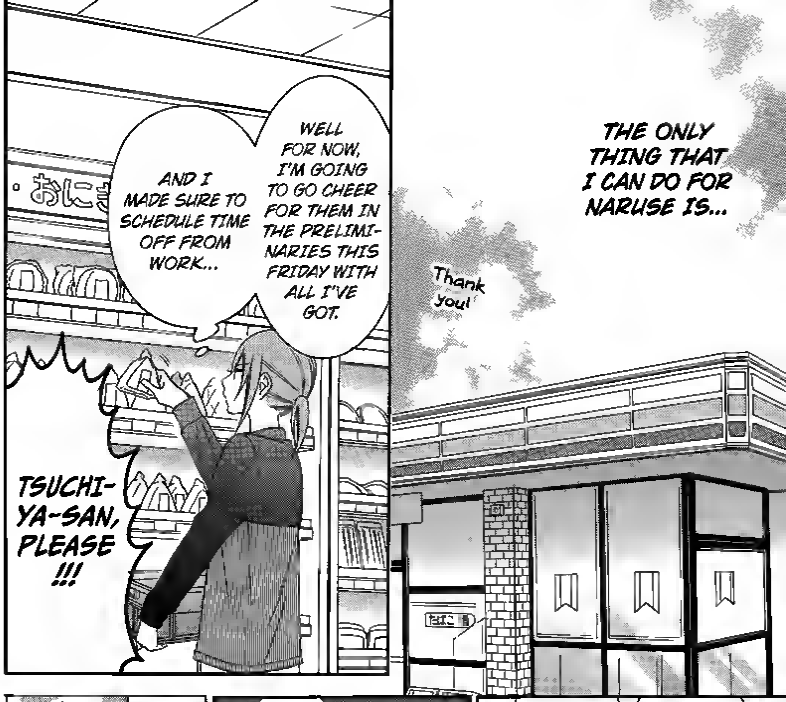
YOU'RE REALLY DOING YOUR BEST.
OH, YEAH..
THAT'S RIGHT..
TIME'S MOVED ON.
THIS ISN'T A PLACE WHERE I CAN JUST CASUALLY WALK IN AND OUT OF NOW.
Turn...
THE COACH OR MIYOSHI-SENSEI SHOULD REALLY BE THE ONES TO GIVE THIS TO THEM, AFTER ALL...

YOU'RE JUST LEAVING WITHOUT SAYING A WORD?
!
I JUST CAME HERE TO GIVE THEM A GIFT! I'M NOT STAYING LONG!
A GIFT?
WHY ARE YOU SHUSHING?
SHHH!
BITE-SIZED ONIGIRI.
There's 3 pokes
AMAZING.

I THOUGHT I'D REPAY YOU
THOUGH I DON'T KNOW IF THAT IS ENOUGH TO CONVEY MY GRATITUDE
GRATITUDE?
I GAVE YOU A BIT OF TROUBLE THE OTHER DAY AND ALL, SO
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANTED, YOU COULD HAVE LET ME STAY THE NIGHT THAT TIME AND LET ME DO SOME THINGS...
WELL IF YOU HAVE TIME TO TELL STUPID JOKES, DOES THAT MEAN YOU'RE READY FOR THE PRELIMINARIES ON FRIDAY?
YEAH, WE'LL BE FINE.
WE'VE BEEN GETTING BY EVEN THOUGH THE UPPERCLASSMEN HAVE ALL GRADUATED.
MORE IMPORTANTLY...
A PERSON WITH ABSOLUTELY NO TIME ON THEIR HANDS IS A HUNDRED TIMES MORE WORRYING
Oh, there he is! What are you doing, Naruse-senpai?
Nothing much
.....
...THIS HATEFUL BRAT.
OR SO HE WANTS ME TO THINK....


BUT I STILL DON'T KNOW THE REAL SITUATION.
MAYBE HE'S STILL FEELING THE PRESSURE OF BEING THE NEW CAPTAIN.
IT'S PROBABLY JUST HIS STYLE, BUT...
IT'S UNFORTUNATE THAT HE DOESN'T SHOW A SINGLE INCH OF IT ON THE OUTSIDE ...
SPLISH_

FROM NOW ON,
I'LL MAKE SURE NOT TO MISS ANYTHING ABOUT YOU.
SOMETIMES,
NARUSE CAN SEE THROUGH MY FEELINGS SO WELL THAT IT'S FRIGHTENING.
BUT AS FOR ME,
I'M NOT AS PERCEPTIVE AS NARUSE.
AND NOW THAT I'M NOT HIS SENPAI IN THE SAME SCHOOL...
OR EVEN THE MANAGER FOR THE CLUB...


THE ONLY THING THAT I CAN DO FOR NARUSE IS...
Thank you!
WELL FOR NOW, I'M GOING TO GO CHEER FOR THEM IN THE PRELIMINARIES THIS FRIDAY WITH ALL I'VE GOT.
AND I MADE SURE TO SCHEDULE TIME OFF FROM WORK...
TSUCHIYA-SAN, PLEASE !!!

PLEASE! I'M REALLY SHORT ON STAFF THIS FRIDAY!
WHAAAT? THIS IS REALLY SHORT NOTICE, YOU KNOW? I REALLY DON'T THINK I CAN.
FRI-DAY...
IF THE PRELIMINARIES WEREN'T ON FRIDAY, I WOULD LOVE TO HELP THEM OUT, BUT...
MINAMI-SAN HAD TO CALL OUT, YOU SEE...
SHE SUDDENLY GOT A CALL TO GO HOME FOR HER GRANDFATHER'S FUNERAL SERVICE, SO...
SHOCK...
MINAMI-SAN...?
WAIT, SHE'S THE ONE WHO FILLED IN FOR MY SHIFT THE OTHER DAY...
N...
The always chipper 20-year-old Asuka!!

NO, STOP, FRIDAY IS...
PLEASE, PLEASE, A THOUSAND TIMES PLEASE!
I HAVE TO CHEER WITH ALL I'VE GOT
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, I TELL YOU!
I have to look after my grandson and all.
CHEER...
UGH!
I CAN'T RESIST!
UM...
I CAN COME TO WORK.
YOU'RE A GOD!
Tweet
Kyaha haha!
Bye bye!
EH?!
SO YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO COME AND WATCH THE PRELIMINARIES THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW?!

I'M GOING WITH SHOUJI AND TONO.
WELL, I WAS PLANNING ON GOING...
BUT SOMETHING CAME UP AT WORK.
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
IF YOU DON'T COME, THOSE GUYS'RE GONNA BE SO DISAPPOINTED!
YOU THINK SO?
I MEAN, JUST LOOK AT THAT NEW CAPTAIN! HE'S TOTALLY IN LOVE WITH YOU!
I WONDER
Though I have none idea what's gonna on, of course!
WHEN I TOLD HIM YESTERDAY THAT I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO CHEER FOR THEM...
Ah, really? Oh well, I guess I'll do my best.
That's how he replied...
THE PRELIMINARY MATCHES ARE SPREAD OUT OVER THREE DAYS...
THERE ARE MATCHES ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, TOO, BUT THE MATCH ON FRIDAY WILL BE THE NEW TEAM'S FIRST EVER, SO THEY'RE LIKELY TO BE VERY NERVOUS.
I WISH THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING I COULD DO TO HELP...
OH, WELL.
GOING TO WATCH THE GAME ISN'T THE ONLY WAY TO CHEER THEM ON. IF YOU HAVE A MESSAGE THAT YOU WANT TO PASS ON TO THEM, I CAN HELP OUT WITH THAT.
See ya!
...A MESSAGE...

DO ME A FAVOR?
I WONDER IF THIS WILL HELP NARUSE
WELL, I'M NOT SURE
CAN YOU...
AMAMIYA-KUN!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO SLAP ME ON THE BACK OR SOMETHING..!
WHAT?!
THIS IS PROBABLY...
JUST SOMETHING TO SATISFY MY OWN SELF.

I'M JUST GOING TO DO WHATEVER I CAN WITH WHAT I HAVE AT THE MOMENT.
ALL RIGHT.
BUT IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT IT IS.
BEING THIS NERVOUS DURING THE PRELIMINARIES IS BAD!
THIS IS BAD, BAD, BAD!
SE...
SENPAI, PLEASE CALM DOWN!
NO, THEY GRADUATED.
THEY RETIRED!
WHY ISN'T TONO-SENPAI AROUND?! WHY ISN'T MANAGER MACHIDA AROUND?!

LET'S SHOW THE OTHER SENPAI WHO CAME TO CHEER FOR US!
THE NE... NEW... RYU... ERRR... THIS BASKETBALL CLUB!
HIMENO-CHAN, YOU'VE GOTTA CALM DOWN, TOO! YOU KNOW IT'S BAD WHEN YOU CAN'T EVEN SAY THE WORD "RYUHOKU!!"
By the way, why are you so calm, Usamin?!
Ah! Lemme have a sip!
Fuck that, you have your own!
Hehehe,
EVERYONE'S LOOKIN' PRETTY UNEASY, EH?
THE FUTURE IS UNCERTAIN~!
Eh? Manager Machida isn't coming?! Why?! She even came and brought a lot of onigiri the other day!
"I'LL CONTINUE TO CHEER FOR EVERYONE."
WAH WAH
"NO MATTER WHERE YOU GUYS GO,"
OH!

Oh!
YOU'RE HERE, YOU'RE HERE!
AMAMIYA, WHAT'S THAT BAG FOR?
AH, MACHIDA ENTRUSTED SOMETHING TO ME.
ENTRUSTED?
YEAH.
By the way, I'm glad you're doing ok even though you split with your girlfriend, Shou!!
We haven't broken up! Who'd you get that from?!
DID RYUHOKU ALREADY COME OUT?
THEY'RE NEXT!
T/N: BIG KANJI ON THE BANNER SAYS "UNITY"
A HANDMADE CHEERLEADING BANNER!
IT'S A WHOLE NEW DIMENSION OF HAND-MADE!!!
Is she Gen'd or something?!
団結
RYUHOKU HIGH SCHOOL BOYS' BASKETBALL CLUB

TICK
TOCK
TICK
I SHOULDN'T SPACE OUT AND STARE AT THE CLOCK, I NEED TO WORK
RUB
RUB
IT'S FINE.
THEY SAID THAT THEY'RE THE THIRD MATCH, SO RYUHOKU IS PROBABLY PLAYING SOON...
...OH.
I EVEN PASSED THAT ON TO AMAMIYA-KUN.
Rio sis! What are you doing?!
And in the foyer of all places?!
RIGHT NOW, THAT'S THE ONLY THING I CAN DO...
TO CONVEY MY FEELINGS...
!
GOOD MORNING!
HUH?!
GOOD MORNING!

.....
MACHIDA-SAN, ISN'T TODAY YOUR DAY OFF?
YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO CHEER AT THE PRELIMINARIES..
WHAT PRELIMINARIES?
OH, I'M TAKING OVER FOR MINAMI-SAN TODAY.
WHAT TIME DOES THE MATCH START?
3:00.
SO YOU CAN STILL MAKE IT, RIGHT? HOW ABOUT YOU GO RIGHT NOW?
HUH?!
BUT...
IT'S STILL A BIT EARLY, BUT I CAN CLOCK IN NOW.
IF I JUST MOVE MY BREAK TIME LATER, THE BOSS AND I CAN CAN HANDLE IT HERE, RIGHT?
RIGHT, BOSS?
OH NO! YOU HAD SUCH AN IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENT?!
NO, IT'S JUST...
IT'S IMPORTANT!
ぎゅっ

RIGHT?
DON'T LIE.
I bet it's because you were begging "please please" again, right boss?
IF THAT'S THE CASE, YOU SHOULD HAVE SAID SO EARLIER!
COME ON NOW, GET GOING!
TH...
While mopping?!
THANK YOU SO MUCH! SO~ FOR THE LATER!
So th
CLAMOR...
THINKING ABOUT WHAT I CAN DO FOR NARUSE...
IS VERY DIFFICULT

RIGHT NOW, I REALLY JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT I CAN DO FOR HIM.
!!
CLAP
CLAP
Push, push, Ryuhoku! Our captain is se.
THAT'S IT, NARUSE!
THAT'S YOUR CHANCE!
MEISEI
MEISEI!
MEISEI!
キュッ
キュッ
!
……

Do your best!
CLAP CLAP
MEISEI! MEISEI!
SWISH
LET'S GO, LET'S GO, MEISEI!
ARGH!
WHAT'S UP WITH THEM?! THEY KEEP FLUBBING UP AT THE LAST SECOND!
IT'S A SHAME SINCE THEIR INDIVIDUAL MOVEMENTS ARE REALLY GOOD.
ENDING THE FIRST HALF WITH A 2-POINT DIFFERENCE, HUH...
BZZZT!

USAMIN! WHY DO YOU CHOOSE THE WEIRDEST PLACES TO WAIT FOR A PASS?!
BECAUSE KUON WAS ALWAYS NEARBY HATORI-SENPAI'S POSITION.
WHAT?! DON'T PASS THE BLAME TO SOMEONE ELSE!
Ugh.
IF I DON'T MAKE THE NEXT FREE THROW, NARUSE-SENPAI WILL HATE ME ...
W-WHAT'S GOING ON HERE...

THEY USUALLY COORDINATE SO WELL DURING NORMAL PRACTICE ..
MAYBE THEY JUST HAVEN'T GOTTEN USED TO THE PRESSURE YET, SINCE IT'S THEIR FIRST MATCH.
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO...
AT TIMES LIKE THIS...

MACHIDA-SENPAI...!!
SWEET
HEY!
GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF, CAPTAIN!
CHITTER
CHATTER
CLAMOR
YOU'VE STILL GOT 20 MINUTES LEFT!
CLAMOR
……
HEY, WHERE ARE YOU LOOKING?! DID YOU HEAR WHAT I SAID?!
HEY!!!
隆北高校男子バスケットボール部
……
ISN'T THAT SENPAI'S HANDWRITING...?
HAND-WRITING?
HM? WHAT?
Whoa?
...NO-THING.

LET'S DO IT LIKE WE ALWAYS DO.
!
WHAT WE DID IN PRACTICE IS GOOD ENOUGH. NO NEED TO PUSH OURSELVES
IF WE MESS UP, WE CAN JUST TAKE BACK THE POINTS AGAIN.
DAY AFTER DAY, WE'VE BEEN PRACTICING, PRACTICING TO WIN.
AND NOT AS SEPARATE INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS, BUT AS A TEAM OF FIVE.
SQUEAK
ALL FIVE OF US ARE HERE, SO NO MATTER HOW I LOOK AT IT,
I CAN'T SEE A SINGLE REASON WHY WE CAN'T WIN.
RYUHOKU
4

THE DOOR ON LINE 2 IS
THE VENUE IS THE SAME AS LAST YEAR
RIGHT OUTSIDE THE NORTH EXIT!
WHAT CAN I DO FOR NARUSE?
WELL, I DON'T REALLY KNOW, BUT I REMEMBERED SOMETHING.
アンビニャ!
KAIJOKU
7
I...
JUST LIKE ALWAYS...
キュッ
キュッ
JUST LIKE ALWAYS...!

JUST LIKE ALWAYS!
!
ARE THEY WINNING?!
ALRIGHT! GO GO GO!
I...
!
SQUEAK
!
MACHIDA!

JUST LIKE ALWAYS..!
NARUSE ALWAYS FINISHES IT OFF FOR US!
I...

I ABSOLUTELY LOVE...
BZZZZZZZ!
GAME SET!
102-97
RYUHOKU
CHEER!
Get off! Too hot!
Nice one!!
Chu
SEEING YOU COMPLETELY TAKEN WITH BASKETBALL.
SO I'LL KEEP ON THINKING.

RYUHOKU
10
4
RYUHOKU
7
THINKING ABOUT WHAT I CAN DO FOR NARUSE,
AS HE CONTINUES TO FIGHT ALL THE WAY.

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TRANSLATOR: NELZE
CLEANERS: UNZAREH
REDRAWERS: NARYA, PLUMJUCIE
TYPESETTER: MSCHIBI, KRAFTY
QC/EDITING: PLUMJUCIE, SHADOWSLAYER

SUNLIGHT IS GOOD FOR YOU... UNTIL IT BETRAYS YOU IN THE FORM OF SUNBURN